

**RESEARCH PROJECT  
GUIDELINES FOR  
MASTR OF COMMERCE  
(M.COM)  
STUDENTS  
(CODE 8566)**



**Department of Commerce  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page Numbers
FOREWORD	3
1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Objectives	4
2. ACCEPTABLE STUDY FORMAT	5
2.1 The Empirical Research	5
2.2 The Theoretical Research	6
2.3 The Feasibility Study/Business Plan	7
2.4 The Business Consultancy Report	8
2.5 Arrangement of Research Workshop	10
2.6 Approval of research topic	10
2.7 Approximate Timelines Relevant To Each Format	10
3. PROJECT LAYOUT	11
4. PROJECT BRIEF	11
4.1 Parts of the brief	12
4.2 Project Proposal	12
4.2.1 Parts of a project proposal	12
4.3 Selection of Supervisor	13
4.4 Evaluation of Research Project	13
4.5 Viva-Voce	14
4.6 Providing References	15
5. APA Style	15
5.1 In-text citation: Referencing sources within the text	16
5.2 Reference list	18
5.3 Various Sources of References	19
6. PLAGIARISM	21
6.1 Elaborating Plagiarism in the Words of Students	21
7. PARTS OF A PROPOSAL	23
8. FORMATING	24

## **FOREWORD**

*“Knowledge without practice is useless. Practice without knowledge is dangerous” Confucius*

Research project guidelines have been compiled using different sources with the aim to produce high quality research projects. American Psychological Association (APA) Manual, Research Guidelines of University of Western Sydney, Australia and FAST School of Business Project Guidelines and AIOU guidelines for master level students were consulted for the completion of this guidelines manual. In this regard, I pay my gratitude to Mr. Muhammad Munir, Lecturer and Mr. Malik Tariq Mahmood (PhD Research Scholar) put their valuable efforts and cooperation to bring forward this research project guidelines manual in minimum period of time.

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# **PROJECT GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR M.COM STUDENTS**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

At M.Com level the students are being prepared to understand business research and be able to apply research results to their practice. The students who complete their projects successfully would be able to bridge the gap between the production of knowledge and real world application of knowledge. Successful completion of Research Project is mandatory for the award of M. Com degree. All research poses a question which motivates the researcher to seek an answer. The project is no different. For all types of research projects, students have to identify a problem in the area of interest, to review the literature relating to the problems area, investigate the problem with a particular research methodology and interpret the results.

### **1.1 OBJECTIVES**

The objectives set for students to undertake the research project are:

- To explore one area of your program in depth
- To work independently on your own initiative
- To gather information in a thorough and rigorous manner
- To process and integrate material in sustained exercise of intellectual ordering
- To produce a coherent, literary document

The project is a concise report comprising of a minimum of 10,000 and maximum of 15,000 words. M.Com students are required to carry out projects on an individual basis.

## 2. ACCEPTABLE STUDY FORMAT

There are number of formats which are acceptable for the research project. The student may discuss his/her proposed topic with the supervisor and choose anyone of the following study formats which best suits:

- a) The Empirical Research Paper
- b) The Theoretical Paper (Theoretical paper is highly academic and is not encouraged in an applied degree)
- c) The Feasibility Study/ Business Plan
- d) The Business Consultancy Report

### 2.1 The Empirical Research

Empirical research involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. An empirical research paper presents its findings in the form of a well-developed analysis defended by the evidence. The data may be gathered first-hand (e.g. interviews, questionnaires, observations, focus group, etc.) or second-hand (e.g. a content analysis of financial reports, television commercials or an organization's internal correspondence; or a re-analysis of existing data like OECD reports or computerized personnel records, etc. The following is indicative of the layout of the main body of an empirical research paper:

**Introduction:** Summarizes the aims of the research project; defines the area or topic; sets the context.

**Literature Review:** reviews the relevant literature providing a commentary on the existing state of knowledge (theories, and empirical evidence), trends, controversies, etc.; identifies gaps in the knowledge and concludes with specific research detail that the study could be replicated (repeated); it provides concise justification for the research strategy chosen.

**Methodology:** Clearly define your research methodology, such as Research Design, Population, Sampling Technique, Sample Size etc.

**Results:** details of findings from the data collection: may include tables, figures, and/or quotes from interviews; may include descriptive and inferential statistics.

**Discussion (including Conclusion):** Pulls together the research questions that were asked with the answers that were obtained through the analysis of the data; provides commentary on these findings (e.g. do they confirm or reject particular views?; how do they conform to the literature?); identifies limitations of the existing study and makes suggestions for future research; state clearly the conclusions that are reached and its implications and recommendations for relevant stakeholders (e.g. businesses, practitioners, governments, academics).

There must be clear links amongst the various sections of the paper. You are telling one story that is made up from several parts; these parts must be well integrated. The data you collect must be linked to the research questions you have identified in your introduction and to the conclusions you have reached at in your Discussion. Your discussion must also refer back to the literature review.

Not all empirical papers follow this precise layout and you and your supervisor may decide that another layout suits your research better. However, it is important to understand the role of the various sections and how they fit together. If you deviate from this layout, you should be clear why you are doing it.

## **2.2 The Theoretical Research**

The theoretical research essentially involves the completion of a comprehensive literature review on a topic of choice. This review draws upon material that has already been published or otherwise exists. That is, it does not mean merely gathering of the data. The purpose of the literature review is clearly established at the beginning of the paper and

generally involves exploring and developing ideas around a particular topic. However, unlike the other format options, there is no “typical layout” for the main body of a theoretical paper.

The chapters may include:

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ Background reasons for selection of topic/ scope of the paper
- ✓ Methodology ( of short listing papers/articles/reports)
- ✓ Literature review (including analysis & critique; please note that this is the key analysis of a theoretical paper)
- ✓ Contribution to the literature

Theoretical research may have any number of specific purposes. The purpose or rationale may be to provide new insights into a particular issue, refine an existing theory or create new linkages, to challenge existing theory or even to develop a new theory. Perhaps the intention might be to develop a set of research assumptions or propositions that can subsequently be tested or modelled (by others).

Regardless of the central purpose, the writing of a sound theoretical paper requires a number of specific skills and abilities that will further be developed and honed through the research process. Those undertaking the theoretical paper must know how to, or learn to, develop and apply theoretical concepts; must develop and apply a strong analytical approach to interpret and evaluate the existing evidence; and be capable of presenting coherent and consistent arguments to demonstrate the significance of the work undertaken.

### **2.3 The Feasibility Study/Business Plan:**

Whereas an empirical research asks and answers a research question, a feasibility study asks and answers a question about whether establishing a new product or service is feasible. It assesses the commercial and technical viability of the proposed enterprise by

exploring potential markets, preparing costing and financial projections, considering the sources of raw material, assessing any plant and equipment needs, etc.

Like all Projects, it will include an introductory summary. However, in a feasibility study, this summary is called an Executive Summary instead of an Abstract. Like all Projects, it will also need to include a title page, table of contents, appendices, etc. a typical layout for the body of the feasibility study is:

- ✓ Introduction: Establishes the rationale for the business ideas, includes any relevant background information and generally introduces the project
- ✓ Product/Service & process Description: provides a clear description and profile of the proposed product/service & researches how you propose to manufacture the product or process the service
- ✓ Product scope, future sales projections and demand gap
- ✓ Management/Employee Structure: who will manage the business, how many staff do you require, profile of staff required
- ✓ Facility layout: Operational view of the business
- ✓ Financial Requirements: what types of financial resources would be required to start the business, how/where do you propose to source this finance and financial projections up to the break-even
- ✓ Plans for Future Development of the Business: where and how will you progress the business idea, what are the issues and challenges
- ✓ Conclusion: is the product/service feasible, what are your conclusions and recommendations.

#### **2.4 The Business Consultancy Report**

A business consultant draws on theory, knowledge and practical experience and applies them to solving a particular business problem or issue. In the Business Consultancy

Report, the student assumes the role of a consultant advising the client on the best options available to solve a business problem. This process involves clarification of the specific business problem, identification, research and evaluation of the various solutions to the problem, the recommendations of one best solution and recommendations on how best to implement this solution. The consultancy project could be in Accounting or Finance. It could involve the analysis of an industry, a company, an expansion, a take-over, as well as systems development, exportation, etc, as with all Projects, your project will require a title page, table of contents, appendices, etc. it will also need an introductory summary (here called an Executive Summary instead of an Abstract). A possible layout for the body of a business consultancy report is:

- ✓ **Introduction:** describes the consultancy project, its goals and the initial issues and options identified
- ✓ **Scope & Goals:** Includes the time scales, the areas the project covers, basis assumption and constraints. Covers the goals relating to the project
- ✓ **Methodology:** Details of the research design and sampling technique
- ✓ **Analysis:** includes a review of the findings (primary and secondary). Identifies and lists the issues
- ✓ **Recommendations:** makes recommendations of the options based on the analysis carried out
- ✓ **Implementation:** (if applicable) details the action plan for carrying out the recommendations
- ✓ **Consequences and Requirements:** (if applicable) identify the implications of the recommendations.
- ✓ **Conclusions**

## 2.5 Arrangement of Research Workshop

The study centres will arrange 2-3 weeks research workshop for guiding the students regarding selection of the topic and preparation of research proposal.

## 2.6 Approval of research topic

The topic of research project should be approved by supervisor/ committee within one month after the conduct of research workshop.

## 2.7 Approximate Timelines Relevant To Each Format

The summary with approximate timelines for the chapters of each of the format is given below:

Timelines	Week 1-4	Week 5 -9	Week 10-14	Week 15 – 16
<b>Empirical research</b>	Finalization of proposal	Working on introduction and literature review, and possibly data collection instrument	Method of the study should be finalized, and fieldwork should be in progress. Results should be concluded.	Finalization of research report. Approval of supervisor. The study centre will submit the report (soft copy in CD and three hard copies) to the Commerce Department AIOU.
<b>Theoretical Research</b>	Finalization of proposal	Working on introduction and background reasons for selection of topic/scope of the paper	Methodology of short listing articles and papers etc. should be finalized. Literature review including analysis & critique be concluded.	Finalization of research report. Approval of supervisor. The study centre will submit the report (soft copy in CD and three hard copies) to the Commerce Department AIOU.
<b>Feasibility study</b>	Finalization of proposal	Working on introduction, product service and product service process description	Product scope, future sales projections, management/ employee structure etc. should be finalized. Financial requirements chapter should be concluded	Finalization of feasibility report. Approval of supervisor. The study centre will submit the report (soft copy in CD and three hard copies) to the Commerce Department AIOU.
<b>The Business consultancy report</b>	Finalization of proposal	Working on introduction, scope and goals, and possibly methodology	Methodology should be finalized. Analysis & recommendations should be provided	Finalization of consultancy report. Approval of supervisor. The study centre will submit the report (soft copy in CD and three hard copies) to the Commerce Department AIOU.

### 3. PROJECT LAYOUT

The physical layout of the project should be as follows:

#### Sections of Project

1. Front cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Title of Project</li><li>❖ Program of Study for which project is submitted</li><li>❖ The author's name, Roll and Registration number</li><li>❖ Supervisor's name</li><li>❖ Year of completion</li></ul>
2. Title page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ The name of the institution.</li><li>❖ Program of Study for which project is submitted (M.COM)</li><li>❖ The year of submission</li><li>❖ The author's name and student ID number</li><li>❖ The title of the project</li><li>❖ The name of the Supervisor</li><li>❖ The following statement to be included at the bottom of the title page; "This project is solely the work of the author and is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of M.Com"</li></ul>
3. Executive Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ This stand alone summary should not exceed one page</li></ul>
4. Acknowledgements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Not required, but you may wish to thank individuals or organizations that helped with the project</li></ul>
5. List of contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Should be entitled "Contents"</li><li>❖ Include list of titles of sections of the project</li></ul>
6. List of tables and figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Include if there are more than five tables/figures</li></ul>
7. Main body of text	
8. Bibliography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Should follow the format provided in the handbook</li></ul>
9. Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Should include details that are not appropriate to include in the main body of the text (e.g. questionnaires, transcripts of interviews, etc) to be lettered A, B, C, etc.</li><li>❖ To have a cover page "Appendices" that appears in the table of contents</li><li>❖ It is not counted as part of the 10,000 word count</li></ul>
10. Back cover	

### 4. PROJECT BRIEF

The project brief is a one page document which conveys the main idea of the project to the prospective supervisor. This is the basis of initial discussions between students and supervisors. Rather than a purely oral discussion, students must approach supervisors with a project brief. Project Brief should be submitted to the supervisor for the evaluation of the topic and its feasibility. There is no presentation required for the brief.

#### **4.1 Parts of the brief:**

The brief should have the following parts:

- ✓ Project title
- ✓ Three to six keywords
- ✓ Two paragraphs (approx. 250 words) explaining the key idea and methodology of the project.

#### **4.2 Project Proposal**

The proposal is a roadmap, showing the location from where the journey begins the destination, and the route taken to get there. It tells us what, why, how, where, and to whom and by whom will the research be done. It is a work plan, an outline, a statement of intent or a draft plan. Study centre will send proposal to the Chairman, Commerce Department dully approved/signed by the supervisor. The proposal should be 4 to 8 pages long (or 1500-3000 words, maximum) and should take the following form:

##### **4.2.1 Parts of a project proposal:**

The proposal for a project should have the following parts:

- i) Project title
- ii) Purpose of the study (introduction/brief background)
- iii) Aims and objectives (usually written as 4-8 bullet points)
- iv) Literature review (including importance/benefits of the study)
- v) Research design and methodology
- vi) The analysis (i.e. the proposed analysis)
- vii) Timelines / project plan (16 weeks)

- viii) Output/Deliverables
- ix) Bibliography
- x) Appendices – brief CV of the researchers
- xi) Appendices – e.g. measurement instrument, depending on project

#### **4.3 Selection of Supervisor**

The study centre will provide supervisors to the students. Details of the students allotted to the supervisors will be sent to the Commerce Department alongwith supervisors' CV. It has to be ensured that the supervisors are either from the middle management of an organization or should be a faculty member in any HEC recognized university. The supervisor should supervise the student by all means, but is not supposed to do work for the student. One supervisor may supervise up to 10 students.

#### **4.4 Evaluation of Research Project**

- 1) The Dean will approve the name of the External Evaluator out of the Panel of three Experts recommended by the Chairperson/Director out of the Panel of Experts approved by the Vice-Chancellor and forward the Project to the External Evaluator for his/her opinion.
- 2) The External Evaluator will evaluate the project, award marks out of the maximum of 100 marks and send the result with his/her comments to the Chairman/Chairperson/ Director.
- 3) In case some cases changes or amendments are required in the Research Project the same will be communicated to the student.
- 4) An extension of six months will be allowed twice beyond one year by the Chairman/Chairperson/Director. Any extension beyond initial two years will be approved by the Dean on the recommendation of

Chairman/Chairperson/Director. The student will have to pay fee equal to one credit of master level program concerned for each extension.

#### 4.5 Viva-Voce

- 1) If a student gets pass marks i.e. 50 percent from both the Evaluators, the Chairman/Chairperson/Director will arrange viva-voce.
- 2) The Viva-Voce Committee will comprise the following:
  - i) Chairman/Chairperson/Director or Dean in case there is no Chairman/Chairperson/Director Chairman
  - ii) Internal Expert to be nominated by the Dean Member
  - iii) External Evaluator/Expert/Advisor (Supervisor) Member
- 3) The Viva-Voce Committee will certify satisfactory defence of the Research Project and its acceptance for Master's Degree and award marks out of 100.
- 4) The marks awarded by the External Evaluators and the Viva-Voce Committee will be added to arrive at the score for the project. The marks so awarded will be forwarded by the Chairman/Director to the Controller of Examinations for notification and award of the Degree.
- 5) In case the student is not able to satisfy the Viva-Voce Committee, he/she will be allowed two more chances to appear for Viva-Voce within six months. If he/she does not satisfy the Viva-Voce Committee the third time, the project will be rejected finally and the student will be allowed to enrol in the project with some other topic.

## **4.6 Providing References**

Referencing is an essential part of research work that acknowledges the sources that you use to write your project report. There are two types of references used in writing the report; In-text citations and full references. In-text citations are used throughout your writing to acknowledge the sources of your information within the paragraphs. The full references for the citations used in paragraphs are then listed at the end of the report in the References list.

M. Com students are required to follow the APA Reference style in their reports. The APA references style is given as under:

### **5. APA Style**

The best scientific report writing of a research project is spare and simple. In the best presentation of your idea, manuscript structure, word choice, punctuation, graphics, and references are very important. They all should be chosen carefully to move the idea forward with a minimum of distraction and a maximum of precision.

To achieve this clarity of communication, publishers have developed rules of style. These rules are designed to ensure clear and consistent presentation of written material. Editorial style concerns standardized use of such elements as:

- ✓ punctuation and abbreviations
- ✓ construction of tables
- ✓ selection of headings
- ✓ citation of references, and
- ✓ presentation of statistics

APA Style refers to the editorial style that many of the social and behavioural sciences have adopted to present written material in the field. APA Style guides users how to structure

and format their work, recommends ways to reduce bias in language, identifies how to avoid charges of plagiarism, shows how to cite references in text, and provides selected reference examples. APA Style was developed by a group of social scientists who wished to establish sound standards of communication. APA Style has been adopted by most of the authors leaders in various fields. APA's style rules and guidelines are set out in a reference book called *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

If you are unable to find the referencing example, you require in this guidelines manual, more detailed information and examples can be found in the above publication.

Current information can also be obtained via the Internet from the official APA Style website <http://www.apastyle.org> which includes tutorials, a blog and FAQs. Corrected Sample Papers from the *Publication Manual* can also be found on the APA website.

Examples of APA referencing, which is the most commonly used in management journals, are provided below:

### **5.1 In-text citation: Referencing sources within the text**

Throughout the text of your paper you need to acknowledge the sources used in your writing. Whenever you present a statement of evidence such as a quote, or when you use someone else's ideas, opinions or theories in your own words (paraphrasing), you must acknowledge your sources. Some examples of how to cite sources within your paper are given below.

If you use the name of the author(s) in your writing, place the year of publication of the work in parentheses after the author's name.

Jamil (2006) conducted research into the effect of...

If you refer to a work in the text of your paper, place the author's last name and the year of publication of the work in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

The research conclusively proved a correlation between the results (Jamil, 2006).

**Note:** When you summarize the general idea of a source in your own words, you must cite the author and year of publication of the work as shown below. APA does not require you to provide the page number unless you use a direct quote, however if you paraphrase or summarize a specific paragraph or section you should consider including the page number.

If you directly quote fewer than 40 words, enclose the quotation by **double** quotation marks within the text. The year of publication of the work along with the page number(s)\* of the quote should be provided in parentheses.

Jamil (2006) referred to this correlation as a “statistical anomaly” (p. 118), contributing...  
or  
It was found that the correlation was a “statistical anomaly” (Jamil, 2006, p. 118).

When there are no page numbers, but the source contains headings or numbered paragraphs, use a section name or paragraph number, e.g. Jones (2008, Introduction section) *or* Roberts (2008, para. 5).

If the paragraphs are not numbered, cite the heading and the number of the paragraph following the heading, e.g. Anderson (2005, Discussion section, para. 2)

If the quotation is greater than 40 words it should be displayed in a double-spaced, indented block (1.3 cm) without quotation marks.

Jamil (2006) stated that:  
If any similar qualitative research is to be undertaken in the future, then stringent controls should be put in place to ensure such statistical anomalies do not occur through lack of methodological rigor, particularly through corruption of data inadequately stored and processed (p. 66).

If you use more than one source to write a statement in your paper, the citation can be presented using semi-colons between works as follows:

Separate sources, different authors:  
...and a number of studies have shown identical results (Sanders, 2008; Smith, 2009).  
*Two or more publications by the same author:*  
It was found that...(Smith, 2000, 2004)

Sources that you cite in your writing are listed in detail at the end of your document in a reference list.

## 5.2 Reference list

A reference list includes details of the sources cited in your project. It starts on a separate page at the end of your report and is titled **References**. Each item cited in the reference list *must* have been cited in your report. All sources appearing in the reference list must be ordered **alphabetically by surname**.

You may sometimes need to include a bibliography in addition to a references list. In contrast to the reference list, a **bibliography** includes details of sources not cited in your paper which were only used to support your research. These items should also be listed in alphabetical order.

*Italics* is the preferred format for titles of books, journals and videos. Article and chapter titles are not italicised or put in quotation marks. Volume numbers are italicised but issue numbers are not.

**CAPITALISATION** in APA style is very specific. For references, the following general rules apply:

Book titles - capitalise the first letter of the first word of the title, and the first letter of the first word after a colon.

e.g. *Ageing and aged care in Australia*

and

*Brave new brain: Conquering mental illness in the era of the genome.*

Article, chapter or section titles - capitalise the first letter of the first word of the title, and the first letter of the first word after a colon.

e.g. Personal resilience as a strategy for surviving and thriving in the face of workplace adversity: A literature review.

Pronouns, acronyms and abbreviations that are normally capitalised should be capitalised in the reference list and citations. See examples on the following pages for each reference type.

For further information see section 4.22 of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition)*.

### 5.3 Various Sources of References

Nature of material	The way information should be presented
<b>Book:</b> When the whole book is written by the named author(s).	Cooper, D. R. and Schindler, R. S. (2001). <i>Business Research Method (7<sup>th</sup> Edition)</i> , Singapore, McGraw-Hill. Note: provide the information on edition of the book if available.
<b>Book:</b> When you are naming the editor of the books	Baum, J. A. C. (ed.) (2002). <i>Companion to Organisations</i> , Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd. Note: use (ed.) for one editor and (eds.) if more than one editors.
<b>Book chapter:</b> When each chapter is written by different authors	Amburgey, T. L. and Singh, J. V. (2002). 'Organisational Evolution' in Baum, J.A.C. (ed), <i>Companion to Organisations</i> , Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd. Note: Mention edition of the book at the end of the book name, if applicable.
<b>Report 1:</b> A stand alone report	Chaplin, J., Mangla, J., Purdon, S. and Airey, C. (2005). <i>The Workplace Employee Relations Survey 2004 Technical Report</i> , London, National Centre for Social Research.
<b>Report 2:</b> Part of a series, hence series number mentioned	Hogarth, T., Hasluck, C. Pierre, G., Winterbotham, M. & Vivian, D. (2001). <i>Employee friendly flexible working 2000: Baseline study of employee friendly flexible working practices in Great Britain</i> , DfEE Reserch Report No. 249, Nottingham, DfEE Publications. Or with three or more authors, you can give the first two surnames and et al. So the above would be: Hogarth, Hasluck et al. (2001), <i>Employee friendly</i> .....
<b>Journal article:</b>	Meyer, J. W. and Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalised organisations: formal structure as myth and ceremony, <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , Vol. 83, No. 2, pp. 340-63. OR Meyer, J. W. and Rowan, B. (1977), 'Institutionalised organisations: formal structure as myth and ceremony', <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> , <b>83</b> (2), 340-63.
<b>Magazine article:</b> e.g. in Time	Elliott, M. (2007), <i>The Chinese Century</i> , Time, Vol. 169, No. 2, pp. 15-20, January 22 Or Elliott, M. (2007, January 22), <i>The Chinese Century</i> , Time, Vol. 169, No. 2, pp. 15-23

<b>Newspaper article 1:</b> When author is known	Roberts, D. (1998). 'BAe sells property wing for \$301m', The Daily Telegraph, London, 10 October, pp. 31.
<b>Newspaper article 2:</b> When author is not known	Guardian (1992). 'Fraud trial at Britannia Theme Park', The Guardian Manchester, 5 February, pp. 4.
<b>Net download 1:</b> Your favourite site	Wikipedia (2007). Harvard Referencing, [online] Available from <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_referencing">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_referencing</a> , [Accessed 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2007] Note: Trust this sheet more than you trust wikipedia! Note: On most web pages, you can see the date on which it was last modified. Use that date in the initial parenthesis and not the date you accessed it on.
<b>Net download 2:</b> <b>Corporate author</b>	Telenor (2007). About Telenor, [online] Available from <a href="http://www.telenor.com/about/">http://www.telenor.com/about/</a> , [Accessed 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2007] Note: On most web pages, you can see the date on which it was last modified. Use that date in the initial parenthesis and not the date you accessed it on.
<b>Working paper</b>	Dex, S. and Smith, C. (2001). Which British employers have family-friendly policies? Analysis of the 1998 Workplace Employee Relations Survey, Research papers in management studies, WP 17/2011, Cambridge, the Judge Institute of Management Studies.
<b>Thesis</b>	David, S. (2003). The role of power in employment relations, unpublished PhD thesis, Cass Business School, London.

### Example of Reference List

(This is how your end referencing should look like – ALPHABETICALLY arranged)

#### REFERENCES

- Andreasen, N. C. (2001). *Brave new brain: Conquering mental illness in the era of the genome*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Atkin, M. (Reporter). (2008, November 13). Bermagui forest disputed turf. *The Hack Half Hour*. Retrieved from <http://www.abc.net.au/triplej/hack/notes/>
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- Hall, B. (Writer), & Bender, J. (Director). (1991). The rules of the game [Television series episode]. In J. Sander (Producer), *I'll fly away*. New York, NY: New York Broadcasting Company.
- Jackson, D., Firtko, A., & Edenborough, M. (2007). Personal resilience as a strategy for surviving and thriving in the face of workplace adversity: A literature review. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 60(1), 1-9. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04412.x
- Potente, S., Anderson, C., & Karim, M. (2011). Environmental sun protection and supportive policies and practices: An audit of outdoor recreational settings in NSW coastal towns. *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 22, 97-101.

Wheeler, D.P., & Bragin, M. (2007). Bringing it all back home: Social work and the challenge of returning veterans. *Health and Social Work*, 32, 297-300. Retrieved from <http://www.naswpressonline.org>

## **6. PLAGIARISM**

The plagiarization, if suspected, will be determined by the Committee comprising:

- i) Dean as Chairman
- ii) Chairman/Chairperson/Director of the concerned Department/Institute
- iii) A subject expert, out of the approved panel of experts other than the External Evaluator of the project
- iv) Internal Evaluator
- v) Co-ordinator of Proejct Activities, if any.

In case the plagiarization is proved, the action will be taken under the Rules and Regulations.

In case a Project is found to be a plagiarized version of another project, thesis, reserch work/text, etc. published or unpublished, his/her candidature for M.Com. shall be cancelled and the student shall be debarred for ever from admission to any programme of the University.

In case the plagiarization is proved after the award of the Degree, the Degree shall be cancelled/withdrawn.

### **6.1 Elaborating Plagiarism in the Words of Students**

You cannot copy anybody else's wording 'word by word' even if you are going to give a reference at the end as this is plagiarism. (The idea is to summarize the thoughts of others in your own words and then give a reference)

Definitions, where it is acceptable to copy the words, can be in quotes followed by the proper in-text reference. It is also acceptable to write a definition without quotation marks

and give the reference immediately after the definition sentence finishes. (Note: Definitions are usually one sentence long)

You cannot copy multiple paragraphs (even if you are using your own words) from someone else's work, and give reference at the end of the last paragraph only, without making it clear that all the paragraphs are from another source as this is still plagiarism. You cannot assume that people will know that e.g. all four paragraphs are from the source mentioned at the end of the fourth paragraph.

If you are copying a list developed by another author (and even if you are using the list to develop sub-heading for your document), you must make it clear that the list was developed by Author X, giving proper in-text and end-text reference. If you do not identify the source of the list, this is plagiarism.

If you copy the first sentence or two of each of the ten to twelve paragraphs from a document and make it into a new paragraph, it is still plagiarism.

If you are consistently using the work of one author for many paragraphs, you may think that it is not essential to repeatedly give the reference. This could be acceptable if you have made it clear that the discussion in a particular sub-section or under a subheading is influenced by the work of Author X. (Note: As mentioned in Item 1, you still cannot use the 'words' of Author X)

If you first copy someone's words and then explain the same idea in your own words, not making it clear which are your words and which are borrowed, this is plagiarism.

If you copy the key thoughts from a paragraph of another author, Author Y, and that author has used multiple references in his/her work in this paragraph, you may end up copying all the referencing in the paragraph. Copying multiple referencing from another

source is plagiarism unless you make it absolutely clear that this collection of references is not yours but that of Author Y.

Overall, referencing should be given in such a way that it is obvious to the reader that you have used the ideas of another person in a paragraph or multiple paragraphs. Also, forgetting to give a reference is plagiarism. Cutting references by accident because the word count was too high is plagiarism. Please note, you may be tempted to retain the well structured sentences of the original documents, but they are not your work.

## **7. PARTS OF A PROPOSAL**

- i) Project title
- ii) Purpose of the study (introduction/brief background)
- iii) Importance/scope of the study
- iv) Aims and objectives
- v) Literature review (review of related literature)
- vi) Research design and methodology
- vii) The analysis (i.e. the proposed analysis)
- ix) Output/Deliverables
- x) Bibliography
- xi) Appendices – e.g. measurement instrument, depending on project

## 8. FORMATING:

Heading:	<b>CAPS BOLD (Font size 14)</b>
Sub heading	<b>Uppercase Bold (Font size 14)</b>
Sub - Sub heading	<b>Uppercase Bold (Font size 12)</b>
Main body:	New Times Roman
Font Size:	12
Line Spacing:	2
Tables Spacing:	1
Left Align and Justified	
Margins:	Left 1.5, right 1, top 1, bottom 1

**TITLE OF PROJECT**



**MASTER OF COMMERCE (M.COM)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration No: \_\_\_\_\_

Department of Commerce  
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities  
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad  
Year

## INNER TITLE



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Roll No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Registration No: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Supervisor

This Project is submitted to Department of Commerce, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of M.Com

Department of Commerce  
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities  
Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad  
Year

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Not more than one (2) pages

**APPROVAL SHEET**  
(Viva Voce Committee)

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Roll No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted by the Viva Voce Committee, Department of Commerce, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad in partial fulfilment of requirements for the Degree of Master of Commerce (M.Com)

**VIVA VOCE COMMITTEE**

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Member \_\_\_\_\_

Member \_\_\_\_\_

(Day, Month, Year)

## CERTIFICATE

The Project entitled “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”,  
at Master of Commerce (M.Com) conducted by \_\_\_\_\_  
Roll No. \_\_\_\_\_, Registration No. \_\_\_\_\_ has been completed  
under my guidance and I am satisfied with the quality of student’s research work.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I, \_\_\_\_\_ Roll No. \_\_\_\_\_ Registration No. \_\_\_\_\_ a student of Master of Commerce in Allama Iqbal Open University, solemnly declare that my research project entitled “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contain no material previously published or written by another person. This research project is not submitted already and shall not be submitted in future for obtaining a degree from same or another University or Institution. If it is found to be copied/plagiarized at later stage of any student enrolled in the same or any other university, I shall be liable to face legal action before Unfair Mean Committee (UMC), as per AIOU/HEC Rules and Regulations, and I understand that if I am found guilty, my degree will be cancelled.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Roll No. \_\_\_\_\_

Registration No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **DEDICATION**

Student Name

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Student Name

## LIST OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Contents	vi
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
<b>Chapter 1</b>	
1. Introduction	1
1.1	2
1.2	2
1.3	2
1.3.1	2
1.3.2	2
1.4	3
<b>Chapter 2</b>	
2. Literature Review	4
2.1	5
2.2	5
2.2.1	6
2.2.2	8
2.3	10
2.4	11
2.5	12
<b>Chapter 3</b>	
3. Methodology	15
3.1	16
3.2	16
3.3	17
3.3.1	18
3.3.2	24
<b>Chapter 4</b>	
4. Analysis	28
4.1	29
4.2	29
4.3	29
4.4	31
4.4.1	31
4.4.2	33
4.4.3	34
4.5	34
4.5.1	36
4.5.2	37
4.6	39
4.7	41
4.8	44
4.9	45

4.10	45
<b>Chapter 5</b>	
5. Conclusion	50
5.1	51
5.1.1	51
5.1.2	54
5.2	55
<b>References</b>	57

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	19
Table 3.2	20
Table 3.3	23
Table 3.4	25
Table 3.5	26
Table 3.6	26
Table 4.1	30
Table 4.2	31
Table 4.3	32
Table 4.4	32
Table 4.5	33
Table 4.6 (a)	42
Table 4.6 (b)	43
Table 4.6 (c)	43
Table 4.7	44
Table 4.8	45
Table 4.9	46
Table 4.10	47
Table 4.11	47
Table 4.12	47
Table 4.13	48

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	14
Figure 4.1	29
Figure 4.2	30
Figure 4.3	46